



LONG TERM PLAN

Consultation Document for Thames-Coromandel District Council MARCH 2015



2015-2025

We want your feedback ... so please take the time to read this document and get involved with your communities' future.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Proposed rates
- Future debt
- Choices to manage rates & debt
- Proposed projects
- New development contributions

WANT MORE DETAILS?

Go to www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp





**2015 -
2025**

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Introduction message

FROM MAYOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

In the footer of Council emails is a tag line which reads “Coromandel will be New Zealand’s most desirable place to live, work and visit.”

A lot of this ten year plan is about the projects and improvements we are making to see this become reality. From the World War 1 Memorial Forests to commemorate all New Zealand’s fallen warriors, our support of the Hauraki Rail Trail, to the Cathedral Coast Walkway and beyond – all build on our natural and heritage assets to make Coromandel the area people will aspire to live in, work in and visit.

When Coromandel looks into the future decade, it sees the march of New Zealand’s biggest cities ever closer and the pressures of large populations nearby. We intend to take the opportunities such growth provides, whilst preserving what makes us unique – our environment.

We are starting to call that future vision, “Coromandel Heritage Region” and beginning planning toward that.

We are excited to present a Long Term Plan which maps a successful and sustainable financial future for Thames-Coromandel District Council. With annual rate increases averaging 1.9% over the decade, and external debt reducing to a level of some \$4M or less, Coromandel is aiming to have the financial resilience to face both the planned and the unplanned events ahead.

There are unplanned costs anticipated. Investigations are not yet complete for projects such as the Thames Indoor Pool, Whitianga Harbour facilities, and the development of Coromandel Harbour. While our 30 year Infrastructure Strategy signals no major water and wastewater plant requirements, there is investigation underway on the underground pipework condition in older settlements such as Thames. This could also add to cost pressures for projects that are not yet approved. The work Council has done to keep costs and external debt down gives us the resilience to respond to any such future cost pressures.

In the 2015/16 year, we are addressing a major cost impact. The three new eastern seaboard wastewater plants, completed in 2009, cost in excess of \$93M. In the planning phase, before recession, it was assumed that 66% would eventually be paid by development contributions. With the recession this assumption was dashed and in 2015 some \$46.6M of unpaid debt will



need to transfer to rates as future growth will not be enough to repay all of this debt within the fifty year life of the plants. This is a major driver of Coromandel requiring a 3.67% rate rise in that year, alongside a draw on our infrastructure reserves. If the situation changes favourably in future, we will review this.

The overall impact of the wastewater debt issue has been contained in the Plan, in large part, because of the fiscal prudence of the Council for the last five years. Looking from when the Council was elected in 2010 out to 2025, the projected average rates increase is 1.26% per annum.

Average District Rate % Increase/Decrease

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
\$2,242	\$2,222	\$2,102	\$2,130	\$2,177	\$2,257	\$2,301	\$2,388	\$2,411	\$2,461	\$2,509	\$2,536	\$2,565	\$2,603	\$2,638
	-0.92%	-5.39%	1.33%	2.21%	3.67%	1.96%	3.78%	0.98%	2.07%	1.95%	1.06%	1.12%	1.51%	1.32%

Please take some time to tell us what you think about the proposals in this consultation document.



Glenn Leach
Glenn Leach
 DISTRICT MAYOR



David Hammond
David Hammond
 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

We want your feedback

The proposals within this consultation document are available for comment until 4pm, Thursday 9 April.

This is your chance to let the Mayor, Councillors and Community Board members understand your views or to put forward your ideas, so please take the time to get involved and have your say.

Our Mayor, Councillors, Community Board members and staff will be available across the district during the month of consultation to discuss the proposals and future planning. Dedicated time in each Community Board area has been arranged on the following days:

Date	Community Board	Venue	Time
16 Mar	Thames	Council Chambers	9am
16 Mar	Tairua	Library	1pm
17 Mar	Coromandel-Colville	Area Office	9am
17 Mar	Mercury Bay	Area Office	1pm
18 Mar	Pauanui	Fire Station	1pm
19 Mar	Whangamata	Area Office	1pm

Your comments and suggestions can also be sent to the Council by:

- Completing the on-line submission form at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp
- Sending us an email to customer.services@tcdc.govt.nz
- Completing the feedback form and posting it to us (address below), or dropping it into the area offices.
- Writing to us at Private Bag, Thames 3540
- Faxing us on (07) 868 9737

Hearings will be held for those who wish to present their submission formally before the Mayor and Councillors in late April 2015.

Once the Council has considered all the public feedback it will make decisions and adopt the Long Term Plan and associated policies for the 2015-2025 financial years. **Remember, you have until 4pm, Thursday 9 April to give us your feedback.**

Alongside the Long Term Plan we are also consulting on the Council's revised Rates Remissions Policy, Revenue and Financing Policy, and Development Contributions Policy. Go to www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp to read the details and make a submission.



What is a Long Term Plan?

This Long Term Plan describes the Council's financial strategy and financial position for the next 10 years. It includes the income and expenditure budgets for each council activity and shows the impact of these budgets on rates and user fees. The Long Term Plan is based on assumptions about:

- our economy in the future – likely growth rates, inflation and interest rates
- the District going forward – population changes, land use changes
- the services we deliver – when the renewing of assets is required, impact from recent legislation

All these factors affect the Council's financial situation and the rates that you pay.

We develop a long term plan every three years to adapt to significant changes in our circumstances

which can come from our own updated information, changes in external factors and in response to community needs. In looking ahead 10 years the Council must consider the impact of short term decisions on future rates, and the future condition of our services and assets. The Council is responsible for being good stewards of the many assets owned by us and to ensure those assets are available for future generations.

The Council follows particular rules in the Local Government Act for its long term planning. These rules include the year we must adopt the long term plan (all councils adopt in the same year), how we manage our consultation and the type of information that is provided to you. The process we follow is audited before we start our consultation and again before we adopt the plan. The rules about the consultation information have recently changed – so you might notice some differences.

What is the role of this document?

The purpose of this consultation document is to provide an effective basis for public participation in our long term planning decisions. It provides a fair representation of the matters that are proposed to be included in the long term plan, explaining what we intend to achieve and how they affect rates, debt and levels of service.

More supporting information is available on www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp or you can call Council on (07) 868 0200 and copies will be mailed to you.

What we are planning

The Long Term Plan 2015-2025 (the Plan) sets out what we plan to do and how much it will cost.

Over the next ten years, we will continue delivering quality, affordable services to ratepayers, residents and visitors.

There are four key aspects to our plan: essential services, local services, financial prudence and economic development. These matters are explained in more detail in the next section but other key matters in the plan include the range of

other activities conducted by the Council which are very much business as usual. More information about all of Council's activities is included on pages 12-13 of this document and more detailed information on each activity is available in the "Groups of Activities Pages" which may be accessed at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp

Essential Services

The Council has identified five of its activities as services that are essential to the overall wellbeing of its communities. These are Water Supply, Wastewater (sewage disposal), Stormwater, Roads and Footpaths, and Rubbish and Recycling. These services, especially the costs of operating and maintaining the infrastructure, account for the majority of the Council's expenditure and are the most widespread of the services delivered.

As well as maintaining and renewing what we own currently, there are quality improvements planned for drinking water, and there are a small number of projects expanding or improving the stormwater and roading networks and the wastewater systems. In the early years of the Plan, we are improving our asset condition information so that future renewals are based on actual needs. In general though, the focus in this Plan for our essential services is on maintaining current high service standards throughout the Coromandel and meeting our legal requirements such as consent conditions.

Our 30 year Infrastructure Strategy provides more detail on how we are managing the assets that support the larger infrastructure groups (water supply, wastewater, stormwater and roading).

The principles that guide this strategy are:

- Making best use of our existing infrastructure and ensuring good stewardship of the investment that we have already made
- Managing our assets based on quality information
- "Right sizing" our infrastructure assets
- Ensuring that we invest in new infrastructure only where demand is certain and long-term
- Taking a careful approach to adopting increased service levels
- Taking a careful approach to investing in new infrastructure primarily for achieving broader (e.g. economic development) objectives.

If you want to know more, the Infrastructure Strategy may be accessed at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp



Local Services

Alongside our five essential services, we provide a range of services and facilities that are important to the vibrancy and social cohesion of our communities and visitors but there is more discretion about the provision of these services.

These activities are governed by our five community boards – a mix of elected community board members and councillors – as they are the people best placed to represent the community to set local priorities for the Plan.

The different initiatives in the Plan show the different priorities for each community.

Mercury Bay is a large and growing area and there is a concerted focus on new facilities that will deliver to both the current population and those who are projected to move here or visit in the future.

Coromandel-Colville community board area, with its established town, laid-back vibe but smaller population, is focussed on the potential of the Coromandel Harbour.

Whangamata Community Board has prioritised completing and upgrading some of the local infrastructure and reserves and advocating initiatives like mangrove removal to give the area a finished and cared-for look while still maintaining a holiday feel.

Thames, with the largest population centre, plans to maintain current facilities and services, partner with others to deliver some new or replacement facilities as well as proposing some local initiatives to support local economic development.

Tairua-Pauanui Community Board has prioritised facilities to access the harbour as well as safety improvements on the access road to Pauanui.

More detail about the big-ticket items and each Community Board's priorities is included on pages 32-44 of this Consultation Document and more detailed information about the activities of each Community Board is available in the "Groups of Activities Pages" which may be accessed at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp



Financial Prudence

Our Council has been elected on a platform of being careful and prudent when making decisions that have to be paid for by others. We have been successful in this to date by focussing on “needs” rather than “wants”. The financial strategy adopted for this Long Term Plan, has some challenging targets. It is a matter of balance; too much fiscal conservatism could stifle progress but unnecessary spending puts pressure on those who have to fund that spending both today and into the future. The single largest financial issue in this Plan is a need to transfer a significant amount of debt, incurred to build the eastern seaboard wastewater plants completed in 2009, from potential future development to rates. Read more about this on pages 15-16.

In summary, our financial strategy is as follows:

- Utilise our existing capacity: invest in economic growth which will in turn support residential growth, assisting our economy to diversify and keeping our communities vibrant.
- Maintain our assets: careful stewardship of the investments already made by our community now and for the future.
- Manage our costs: maintain current service levels but keep pushing for operating efficiencies and provide new infrastructure “just in time” and at the “right size”.
- Prioritise essential services, but empower each community to have some choice and flexibility for those discretionary activities which support the uniqueness of each place.
- Spread the burden of rates fairly and equitably ensuring that those who cause the need for the service are, as far as possible, contributing to those costs.
- Be conservative: balance our budget over the long-term and recognise that debt is a prudent tool to use as a bridging mechanism when funding long-term assets but ensure that –
 - the costs of borrowing (interest) are not unaffordable in the future
 - there is a fair contribution to costs of growth from future development; and
 - there is still room to borrow more externally to provide future financial resilience.

In the first year of the Long Term Plan the budget is not balanced because our contributions to the Hauraki Rail Trail and the Great Walks project are funded by debt. This position resolves itself by Year 2 of the Long Term Plan. Council considers this approach is prudent because the benefits from these projects are expected to be on-going.

We have set the following financial parameters in our financial strategy, which have guided the financial decisions made in the Long Term Plan:

Rates

- Our ultimate target is an average cumulative district rate increase of no more than CPI
- Our target for the Strategy is an average cumulative district rate increase of less than or equal to LGCI¹ + 2%
- We will aim for no more than 80% of total revenue to come from rates.

Debt Levels

- External debt will not be any more than 150% of total rates revenue

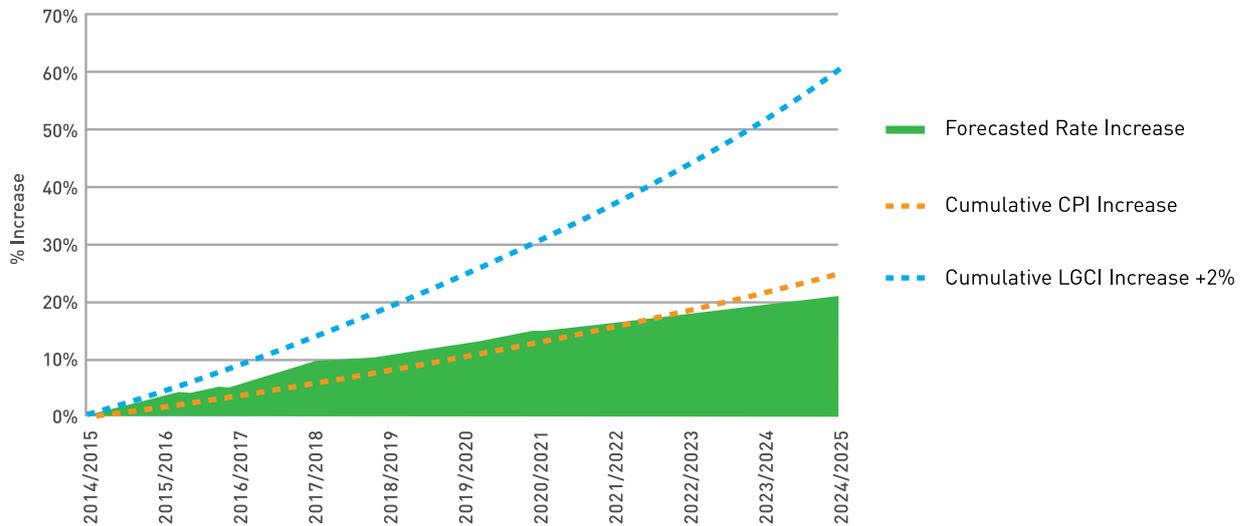
We have compared our Long Term Plan to all of these parameters and we are well within all targets except that the projected average cumulative rates increase is greater than CPI until 2021/2022 (but it remains within the target set in the Strategy at all times). The average rates impacts of the proposals in the Plan on a range of property values are set out in tables in each Community Board area from page 32 of this document. Graphs showing our cumulative average rate increase compared to CPI and LGCI and levels of debt compared to rates revenue follow.

¹ Inflation is commonly measured by comparing the price of a fixed collection of items used by households over time. This is known as the consumer price index or CPI. The goods and services that Councils need to purchase to deliver services are a different mix than for households, for example asphalt for roads, so local government inflation is typically different, and higher than the CPI. This rate of inflation is referred to as the Local Government Cost Index or LGCI.

Our Financial position – rates and debt

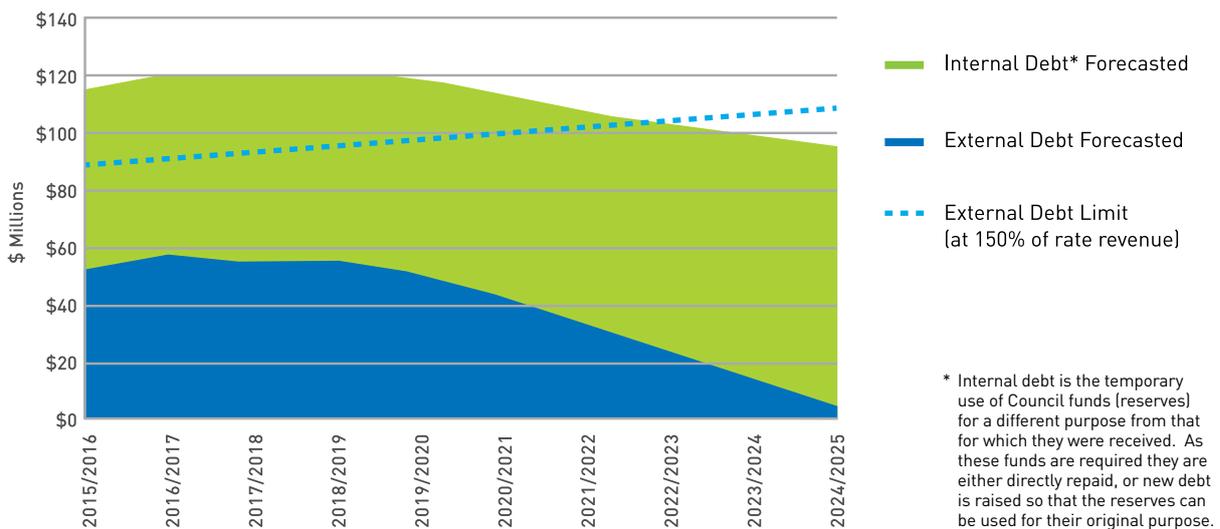
Rates

Cumulative Average District Rate % Increase



Debt

Forecasted Debt and Debt Levels



If you would like more information, the Financial Strategy may be accessed at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp



Economic Development

Investing significantly in activities and projects to support the economic development of the district as a whole is a major focus of the Council throughout the ten years of this Plan. Council's economic development activity is guided by a strategy and action plan which has been developed to facilitate economic growth by capitalising on our District's existing strengths and opportunities.

The economic development package covers several bases. There are three anchor projects: Coromandel Great Walks – Cathedral Coast Walkway, stage two of the Hauraki Rail Trail from Kopu to Kaiaua and the development of the

Coromandel Harbour for aquaculture, tourism and connections to Auckland. All of these projects involve other key partners alongside the significant investments by the Council. Other significant investment is made in the continued operation of Destination Coromandel and the i-SITES and Information Centres in the larger towns, a major events grants fund and joint venture marketing with neighbouring economic development agencies.

The full Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan may be accessed at our website www.tcdc.govt.nz/business



About the Coromandel

The Coromandel Peninsula is a place of outstanding natural beauty with a proud history.

Its many advantages can be seen in our soaring mountain ranges, white sand beaches, native forest and bush, as well as the Maori and early-European heritage evident in our older towns and settlements. In more recent times, the wonderful climate and proximity to the population centres of Auckland and the Waikato has meant the Coromandel holiday settlements have experienced periods of rapid growth.

Our ratepayers

Approximately 55% of our ratepayers reside outside of the district – this varies from around 27% in the Thames community board area to around 71% in the Tairua-Pauanui community board area. This characteristic is projected to increase in the future. There are 26,679 rating units in the district.

Population, housing and rating unit changes

Over the next ten years there is projected to be low growth overall on the Coromandel. While small additional numbers of residents are expected in Mercury Bay, small declines in resident numbers are expected in the Thames, Tairua-Pauanui and Whangamata areas. However, the popularity of all areas as holiday destinations means we are still projecting small increases in new houses and rating units in every community board area throughout the ten year period.

If you want the details about our growth projections they can be found at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp



Resident population

Residents of the Coromandel are older than the New Zealand average with 27% aged 65 or older (almost double the national average). The number of people living in the Coromandel at the 2013 census was 26,847. Personal income levels are lower than average; 43% of people aged 15 years and over received personal income of less than \$20,000, compared to 38% across New Zealand but the rate of home ownership is much higher at 70% compared to the average (55%) across New Zealand.

About our services and activities...

The Council manages a wide range of services and assets on behalf of the community. Many residents and ratepayers have a better understanding of our services after they have had some specific contact with us over them. The following information shows you the breadth of the services we offer and the activities/assets we manage.

We maintain ...

- 445 km of sealed roads and 230km of unsealed roads
- 150 bridges
- 9 water treatment plants and 48 reservoirs
- 538 km of water pipeline
- 10 wastewater treatment plants
- 128 wastewater pump stations and 6,382 wastewater manholes
- 13 community halls and centres
- 2 airfields
- 1 swimming pool
- 21 cemeteries
- 5 wharves and 9 all tide boat ramps
- 37 playgrounds
- 83 public toilets

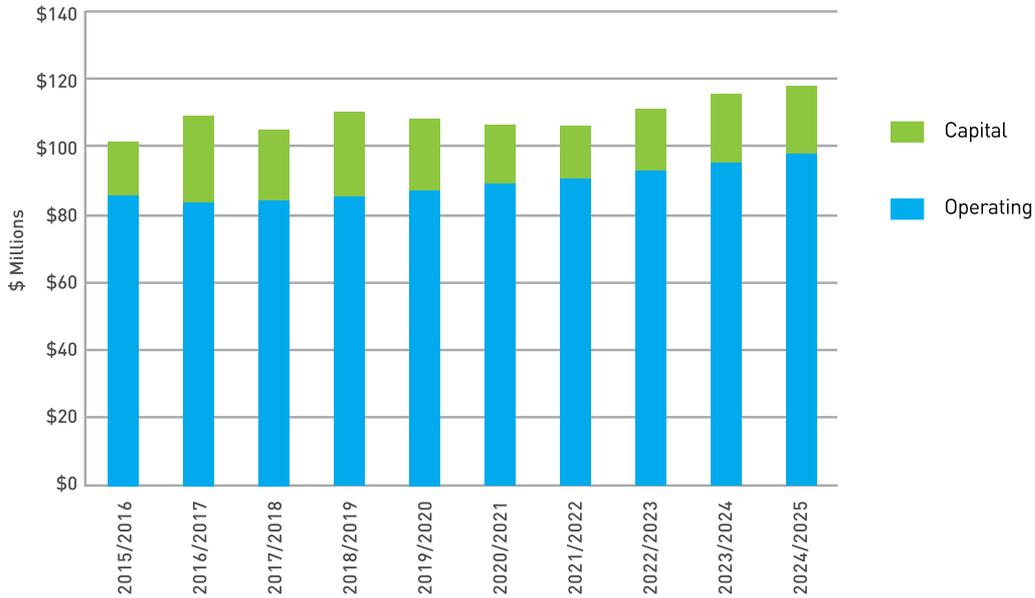
In the past 12 months we ...

- Approved 297 resource consents
- Produced 4,833,973 m³ of treated water
- Reduced the amount of waste going to landfill from 516kg to 463kg per rating unit
- Processed 1285 LIM requests
- Completed an adventure style playground at Island View Reserve
- Issued 256,958 library items
- Completed a new pontoon and boat ramp extensions at Whitianga and Whangamata
- Operated the Hahei to Ferry Landing shuttle for 32 days
- Carried out 358 inspections on the 286 registered food premises
- Received 211 new dwelling consents and on average processed these in just over 11 days
- Held three civil defence exercises
- Received 995 building consent applications



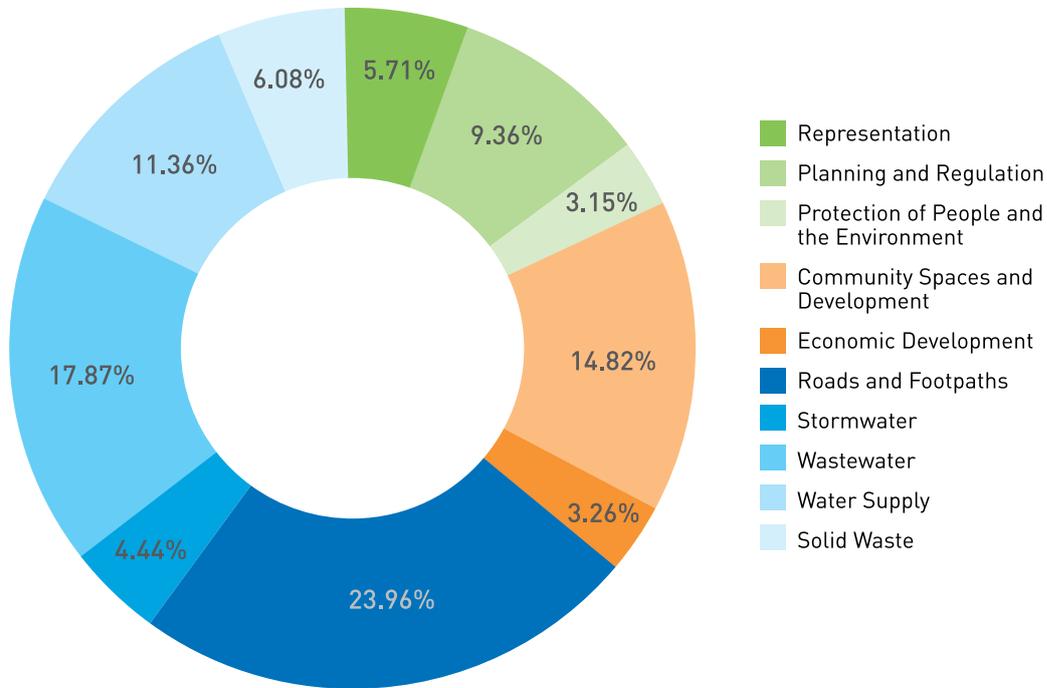
To deliver our services to the community and maintain the District's assets over the next ten years will require \$892 million for operating expenditure and \$197 million for capital expenditure.

Total Expenditure 2015-2025



We spend the majority of our budgets on our essential services as the following chart displays.

Activities as a percentage of Total Budgets



Levels of Service

Throughout the Long Term Plan, we maintain our levels of service across all activities. There are some variations in expenditure in some years but these are generally because of individual project variations. The main operating expenditure changes are to the following activities and projects:

Activity Group	\$ Change 2015/16	Explanation	\$ Change 2016/17	Explanation
Community Spaces and Development – Thames	+\$3.6M	\$3.1M additional expenditure for Indoor Sports facility	+\$1.8M	\$1.1M additional expenditure for Indoor Sports facility
Economic Development	-\$366K	Contribution to Great Walks project decreased \$443K	-\$506K	Contribution to Great Walks project decreased \$687K
Planning and Regulation – Strategic Planning District Plan	-\$715K	No Long Term Plan: saving \$247K Less District Planning: saving \$284K		
Solid Waste	-\$476K	Completed closing Coromandel Landfill 2014/15 saving \$465K		



Our challenges and opportunities

Local Government must be financially sustainable to continue delivering services to its communities now and into the future.

This involves a balancing act of delivering services while keeping the income required affordable, ensuring equity between current and future generations, along with fairly sharing the costs of service delivery between different users.

Our biggest financial challenge is the need to fund our eastern seaboard wastewater plants from rates rather than future development.

Eastern seaboard wastewater plants

In 2006 the Council agreed on the construction of three new wastewater plants to service the communities of Whangamata, Whitianga, Tairua and Pauanui. The new plants involve highly sophisticated treatment processes that can be sped up to cope with the summer peak and produce water suitable for irrigation.

The new wastewater plants were required because the existing plants did not have the capacity for the summer peaks which meant there were odour problems and resource consents were not being met. At the same time, the eastern seaboard towns were developing rapidly with new and subdivided lots needing greater capacity and higher environmental standards for the treated discharges expected by residents.

The approved business case for the three wastewater plants included estimated costs of \$75 million and noted a +/-20% variation for uncertainties which were linked to two of the resource consents yet to be scoped and obtained, uncertainty with accurate loads for the peak summer periods and uncertainty about the disposal of the biosolids. The total project cost \$93 million which is 1% higher than the maximum variance estimated in 2006. The project costs over and above the original estimate of \$75 million included \$10 million required for the discharge to forest land for the Whangamata plant, costs associated with sludge disposal and pump station upgrades for all three plants and discharge

disposal and resource consent costs for Whitianga and Tairua-Pauanui plants.

In 2006 the capacity of the new plants was described as having approximately 50% more capacity than the existing connections. A recent review of the plants has found that some parts of the plants are near capacity now. Determining the capacity of the plants is complex as the four major parts of the plant have quite different capacities. The costs involved to increase the different parts of the plant are also very different. We intend to extend the capacity of all the plants in the near future by optimising the operations of the plants with some small modifications. Both the Tairua-Pauanui and Whitianga plants can have a third treatment module added in the future which will add approximately one-third more capacity.

When the Council agreed to build the three wastewater plants in 2006 the eastern seaboard had been experiencing very high growth for several years. Projections for future growth were also high. The debt for the wastewater plants was to be repaid by existing and new ratepayers through their wastewater rate and from developers through development contributions. Given the growth projected at that time, the majority of debt to build the wastewater plants would have been repaid over the following 10 years. Development contributions were a new funding tool made available to councils in 2004 through new legislation. The proportion of the cost to be paid from development contributions

Eastern seaboard wastewater plants [cont.]

was approximately two-thirds of the total cost. As such, Council would borrow in the short term, until development took place to cover these costs.

The global recession in 2008 changed the situation and stalled development. In its 2009 Long Term Plan, based on external advice, the Council reduced the growth projections for the District for the next several years and then showed growth at previous levels. In its 2012 Long Term Plan the projections for the next several years were again slowed down to reflect new advice that the recession was a global phenomenon that would recover more slowly. The global recession was more complicated than previous economic downturns and we now know that the advice Council received was overly optimistic about future growth levels.

In 2014 the Council recognised that the interest accumulating on debt to be repaid by future development contributions was not sustainable and funded the interest on that debt in part through wastewater retained earnings (rates collected in previous years). We also advised that a detailed review of this issue would be undertaken for the Long Term Plan. Following this review, the Council has moved \$46.6 million of the future development related debt to be repaid by rates. This is because the capacity associated with this debt is no longer available for new development and the slow growth projections mean that it is not financially prudent to expect all of this debt to be repaid by future development prior to the retirement of those assets.

The movement of debt from future development to rates meant the wastewater rate would increase significantly in 2015/16. However, Council considers that it is reasonable to transition the impact of this unexpected cost over the first three years of the 2015 Long Term Plan by using wastewater retained earnings to fund some of

these costs. After applying retained earnings the wastewater rate, which was \$674 (+ GST) in 2014/15, increases in each of the first three years of the Plan to \$761 (+GST), \$762 (+ GST) and \$765 (+GST) respectively.

The other option for Council is to do nothing – the status quo. The rating impact of this option would be to lower the rates increase throughout the ten years of the Plan (for example, by 1.8% on average in the 2015/2016 year) but we consider this option to be both financially imprudent and incorrect. Based on forecast growth, it would lead to ever accumulating debt, some of which has no realistic chance of being repaid before the plants have reached the end of their lives. It would also be incorrectly charging for some of the debt against future development.

Capital projects to increase the plants' capacity over the next 10 years have been aligned with the new slow growth scenario within the 2015 Long Term Plan, which has been factored into the future development contribution rates. Approximately \$8.8 million of the eastern seaboard wastewater plants' construction cost remains a debt associated with future development contributions.

Visitors and growth

Our economy today is strongly reliant on the discretionary spend of visitors and holiday-home owners making us particularly vulnerable to recessionary pressures. We have extreme peaks in demand for essential services at key holiday times. Our physical advantages come with some additional costs: small settlements supporting a relatively large number of separate infrastructure networks; our coastal settlements are vulnerable to sea level rise and our hilly terrain and infrastructure sustains damage from extreme weather events. We also face the prospect of declining residential population and potential changes in demand for services from an ageing population.

Another key challenge for us is that the growth outlook we are projecting for the next 30 years is considerably different and lower than what we assumed in previous long term plans. While this has an upside – we do not need to provide as much new infrastructure as had previously been thought – we also have spare capacity in some of our assets and we have to reconsider how to fund some of the infrastructure already in place.



New development contributions regime

The rules for applying development contributions were changed by the Government recently. We can no longer charge for some activities; the calculation method has changed and a schedule of assets is now included in the policy. A new policy that reflects these changes is now available for public consultation. Many of the development contributions proposed to be charged for 2015/16 onwards have changed significantly because of the rule changes and changes in the future projects as well as the movement of wastewater debt. These changes have moved costs from future development to rates.

Estimated Development Contributions

	2014/15	2015/16
Hahei	\$7,532.42	\$9,101.45
Matarangi	\$7,025.04	\$5,146.35
Whitianga	\$21,602.44	\$15,214.91
Whangapoua	\$5,115.92	\$4,135.89
Cooks Beach	\$16,688.90	\$5,272.72
Opito Bay	\$5,115.92	\$4,135.89
Kuaotunu West	\$5,115.92	\$4,135.89
Kuaotunu	\$5,115.92	\$4,135.89
Hot Water Beach	\$5,115.92	\$4,135.89
Tairua	\$28,738.42	\$15,992.40
Pauanui	\$22,365.46	\$14,302.91
Thames	\$11,138.37	\$5,050.51
Matatoki	\$15,827.90	\$8,997.52
Thames Valley	\$13,283.44	\$6,473.31
Whangamata	\$40,265.16	\$14,977.52
Onemana	\$3,559.65	\$3,371.75
Coromandel	\$18,787.65	\$7,698.59
Oamaru Bay	\$4,277.27	\$3,287.97
Mercury Bay Rural	\$5,115.92	\$4,135.89
Tairua-Pauanui Rural	\$4,234.13	\$3,561.01
Thames Rural	\$4,848.58	\$2,321.68
Whangamata Rural	\$3,559.65	\$3,371.75
Coromandel-Colville Rural	\$4,277.27	\$3,287.97

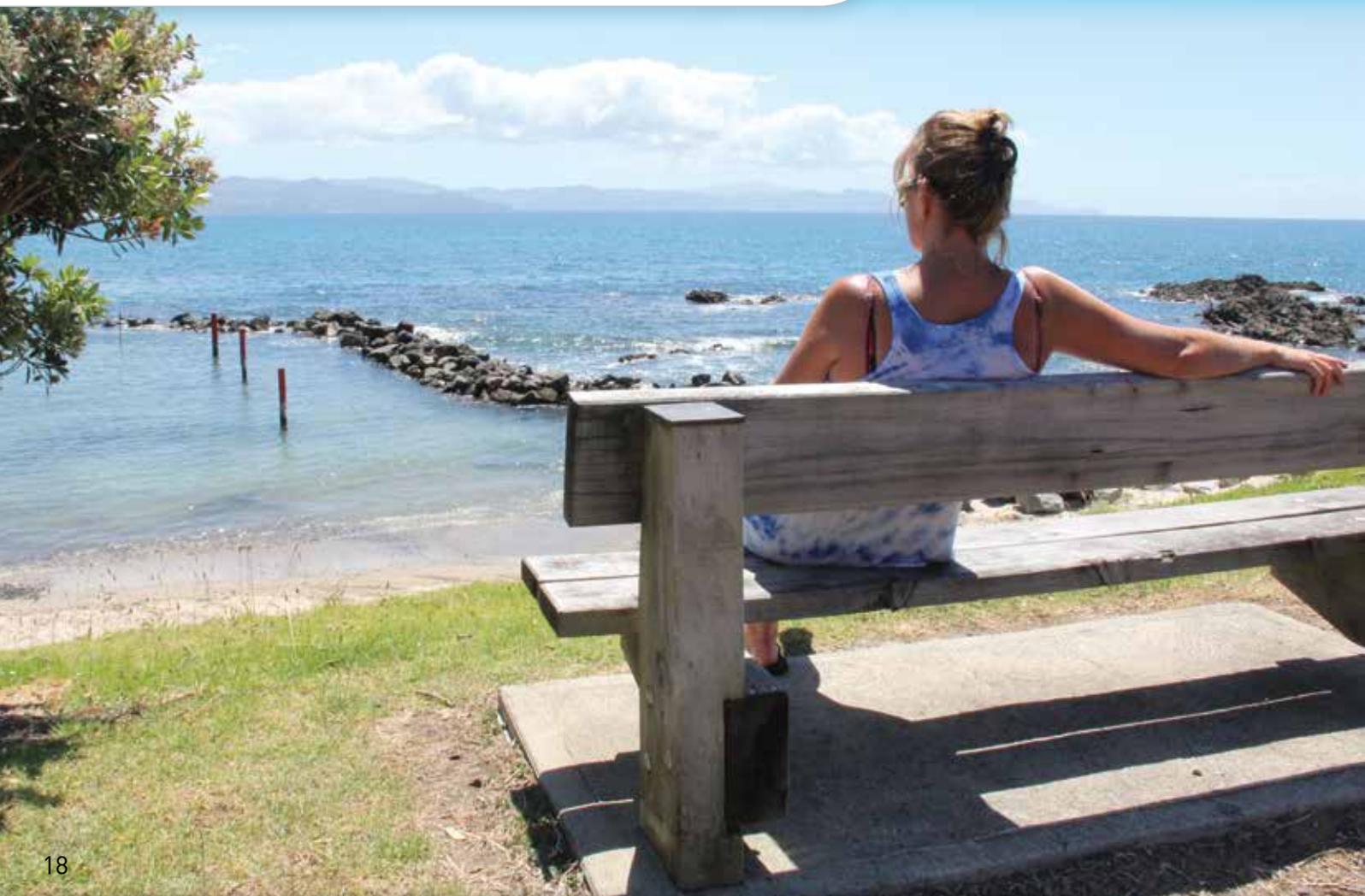
For more details about the Development Contributions Policy changes please look at the Statement of Proposal document and the revised policy at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp

Treaty settlements and co-management

Hauraki Iwi and the Crown are now well advanced in the settlement negotiation process. Post-treaty arrangements with Hauraki will be a focus over the next three years in particular and have the potential to bring new challenges and opportunities as Iwi become an investment partner in the District.

Issues and choices

We are proposing some new initiatives and some changes to the way we fund our services. Please let us know what you think about these proposals.



Changes to who pays – Funding Essential Services

There are five services we consider essential to the functioning of our District. These services are Water Supply, Wastewater, Stormwater, Roads and Footpaths and Rubbish and Recycling.

We have taken the view that those who create the need for these services, and those who benefit from the provision of these services are one and the same. Further, we consider that everybody in our community, regardless of where they live, over time, should have equitable access to these services based on need. This means that, in general, all those who benefit from these services should be paying the same amounts for these services, irrespective of the underlying costs of service delivery.

As long ago as 2003, the Council implemented policy to rate for the capital costs of wastewater on a district-wide basis, alongside the district

funding already in place for the day-to-day operating costs of the service, rather than charging each community for the costs of its specific system. In the last Long Term Plan 2012-2022 there were further changes made to the policy so that funding the supply of water is now spread across all communities not just the one in which the scheme is located. This resulted in a one-off, permanent change to the water rates bill.

In the 2012-2022 Long Term Plan, there was a proposal to move the funding of Stormwater to a district funding basis as well but, ultimately, the proposal was not implemented in order to moderate what would otherwise have been substantial rate movements for some members of the community. However, Council stated that it would consider this proposal again in the 2015-2025 Long Term Plan.

Proposal				
Options Considered	Implications for levels of service	Financial implications		
Proposed: Move Stormwater Activity funding from a scheme basis to a district-wide basis.	By spreading the costs of the stormwater infrastructure over the whole District, it is considered feasible to maintain current service levels in each community.	District wide rate of \$88.01 The cost of stormwater will be spread across all ratepayers. The stormwater rates on an average value property will be \$88.01		
Status quo – Stormwater is funded scheme by scheme by each community	Over time, the financial implication is that smaller communities, or those communities with old infrastructure, where depreciation has not been sufficiently funded, may have difficulty affording the costs of stormwater infrastructure renewals and/or upgrades with the potential to require reduced levels of service. The general implication is that smaller communities will pay a higher amount of rates. However, this is an overly simplistic view as the Thames-Coromandel District has varied geography which means each area's needs for a stormwater network is equally variable.	Stormwater rate per rating unit		
			Cost difference	
		Thames Ratepayers in Thames would pay \$100 each more if we did not move to District funding of stormwater	\$188.02	+\$100.01
		Ratepayers in all areas except Thames would pay lower rates in 2015/16 if stormwater was to remain as local funding		
		Coromandel-Colville	\$83.14	-\$4.87
Mercury Bay	\$75.29	-\$12.72		
Tairua-Pauanui	\$53.33	-\$34.68		
Whangamata	\$45.37	-\$42.64		

Changes to who pays – Local Services

Over the last four years, the Council has examined all of its services and more explicitly recognised those that are primarily provided for the benefit of the local community. These services are funded locally which enables the diversity of the District to be provided for in the ways most appropriate to each community. Community Boards feed directly into the Council decision making process to set local priorities for local services. As part of the broader review of service, Public Conveniences and Cemeteries, two services which have previously

been district funded, are now considered to be primarily for the benefit of the local communities. It is proposed that the net costs of these services are funded by each local community (after deducting user fees and charges).

There has also been a small change proposed to the funding of Library Services so that all of the costs associated with the Libraries are now funded locally rather than in part by a charge across the whole District.

Proposal				
Options Considered	Implications on levels of service	Financial implications		
Proposed: Move the net costs of public conveniences from district funding to local funding	Community boards will decide the priorities for public conveniences in their community board areas and, increase or decrease service levels according to the needs of their community and their ability and willingness to pay for these service levels.	There is a different impact in each community board area		
			New local rate	– (less than)/ + (more than) the status quo – e.g. Thames ratepayers will pay \$3.08 less than the status quo
		Thames	\$33.41	-3.08
		Coromandel-Colville	\$50.66	+14.14
		Mercury Bay	\$28.21	-8.31
		Tairua-Pauanui	\$46.46	+9.94
Status Quo The net costs of public conveniences remain as a district funded general charge through the UAGC	There may be sub-optimal decisions made regarding service levels as the costs of providing the service are averaged.	\$36.52 UAGC		
		Thames	\$31.54	+7.19
		Coromandel-Colville	\$49.53	+25.18
		Mercury Bay	\$18.79	-5.56
		Tairua-Pauanui	\$17.71	-6.64
		Whangamata	\$18.92	-5.43
Proposed: Move the net costs of cemeteries from district funding to local funding	Community boards will decide the priorities for cemeteries in their community board areas (including heritage cemeteries) and increase or decrease service levels according to the needs of their community and their ability and willingness to pay for these services.	\$24.35 UAGC		
		Thames	\$31.54	+7.19
		Coromandel-Colville	\$49.53	+25.18
		Mercury Bay	\$18.79	-5.56
		Tairua-Pauanui	\$17.71	-6.64
		Whangamata	\$18.92	-5.43
Status Quo The net costs of cemeteries remain as a district funded general charge through the UAGC	There may be sub-optimal decisions made regarding service levels as the costs of providing the service are averaged.	\$24.35 UAGC		
		Thames	\$31.54	+7.19
		Coromandel-Colville	\$49.53	+25.18
		Mercury Bay	\$18.79	-5.56
		Tairua-Pauanui	\$17.71	-6.64
		Whangamata	\$18.92	-5.43

Economic Development

Our direction and vision emphasises facilitating and activating economic development within our District. This direction was indicated in the 2012-2022 Long Term Plan and took more shape with the production of an Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan adopted in December 2013. The Action Plan led to an expanded Economic Development programme in our 2014-2015 Annual Plan and a different funding approach recognising the changed objectives, beneficiaries and overall affordability of the proposals. The three anchor projects from which the Council's contribution to the District's economic development would be driven were outlined in that plan and they remain the cornerstone of the long term programme. The 2015-2025 Long Term Plan is Council's first opportunity to clearly set out its longer term proposals for economic development as a whole, the proposals for funding and to receive feedback on these proposals.

The Ten Year Economic Development Package

Our Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan has been developed to facilitate economic growth by capitalising on our district's existing strengths and opportunities. Our ultimate

goal is to create an environment where it is an easy decision for the private sector to invest in businesses and jobs in the Coromandel and for our non-resident population to spend more time here or live here permanently.

As well as restructuring and refocusing the Council so that we are efficient and effective in providing services, we have developed an ambitious ten year work programme to facilitate and unlock economic development.

Anchor projects

1. **Coromandel Harbour Sugarloaf development** (supporting the aquaculture industry) – \$5.89M + supporting roading improvements \$1.675M = total \$7.57M (offset by payment from the industry of \$3.6M)
2. **Great Walks** \$1.477M + supporting roading improvements \$1.050M = total \$2.527M (+previously approved \$1.525M)
3. **Hauraki Rail Trail** \$1M +\$0.26M currently committed. Note: The Rail Trail is part of the Roads and Footpaths activity, not economic development given that it supports alternative transportation modes.



Economic Development [cont.]

More detail about our anchor projects can be found at:

- **Coromandel Harbour project.** www.tcdc.govt.nz/coroharbourproject
- **Coromandel Great Walks project** www.tcdc.govt.nz/corogreatwalks
- **Hauraki Rail Trail (Kopu to Kaiaua)** www.tcdc.govt.nz/hrt
- Continue part funding 2 sub-regional visitor information centres (funding to be gradually reduced through the ten year period) – \$1.475M
- Continue part funding Destination Coromandel to facilitate marketing of our District to national and international visitors (funding to be increased by \$25K per year throughout the ten year period) – \$4.9M.
- Major Events – funding to encourage a broader range of major events especially in the off-peak season. (funding gradually increasing throughout the ten year period) – \$2.4M.
- Joint Venture Investment Marketing – working in partnership with other key economic development agencies such as ATEED to increase our reach and product offering – \$1.58M.
- A number of smaller, discrete projects throughout the ten years that are recommended in the Economic Development Action Plan. For example, there is funding

provided to investigate and develop a business case for an IT Hub, and to develop a post treaty settlement economic development strategy in partnership with the Hauraki Collective.

- Another initiative being pursued as part of the Economic Development package is the potential for the Coromandel to become a Heritage Region. There are no project costs associated with this project as, in its conceptual stage, it will only require staff resource.

We also have locally focussed economic development initiatives planned by Community Boards.

As part of the strategy and planning over the last two years, we have taken account of a national i-SITES review that concluded there should be only 2 sub-regional i-SITES in our District at Thames and Whitianga. This led Council to reconsider its approach to funding the information centres in Tairua, Pauanui, Whangamata and Coromandel and a conclusion that these are primarily for the benefit of the local community. However, moving costs to local rates would cause substantial rate movements for some members of the community, so Council has decided that this change in funding should be phased in over the next three years.

Additionally, when we prepared our last Annual Plan 2014-2015, we signalled that we would be reviewing a perceived inequity in the current funding structure between moteliere and other



Economic Development [cont.]

providers in the short-term accommodation sector. These include Bed and Breakfast operators and those letting their residences on a short term basis such as through Book-a-Bach or similar. Moteliers pay the commercial portion of the Economic Development rate and their competitors do not.

We have completed our review of the sector and concluded that there is an inequity in the current arrangements. In order to reduce this inequity we propose two changes:

- the introduction of a targeted fixed rate of \$200

per property for those who make their homes available on a short term basis for holiday rentals; and

- classifying Bed and Breakfast businesses who have 4 or more bedrooms available for short term accommodation as Commercial rather than Residential ratepayers. They will then pay commercial rates.

More detail on these proposals can be found in the Financial Impact Statement and Revenue and Financing Policy statement of proposal at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp

Proposal					
Options Considered	Implications on levels of service	Financial implications			
		Additional targeted rates per rateable unit in each Community Board Area			
Proposed: Move the funding of the Tairua, Pauanui, Whangamata and Coromandel Information Centres to local funding over the next three years.	No implications for levels of service with this proposal.		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
		Coromandel-Colville	\$16	\$23	\$26
		Tairua-Pauanui	\$11	\$16	\$19
		Whangamata	\$9	\$12	\$14
Status quo	No service level implications but not in line with national strategy to focus on key sites.	Additional cost all ratepayers	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
		UAGC	\$4.97	\$7.09	\$8.33
Fully locally fund the Tairua, Pauanui, Whangamata and Coromandel Information Centres from Year One of Long Term Plan.	Community Boards may have considered decreasing funding which would impact on levels of service.	Additional targeted rates per rateable unit in each Community Board Area			
		Coromandel-Colville	\$32		
		Tairua-Pauanui	\$22		
		Whangamata	\$17		
Options Considered	Implications on levels of service	Financial implications			
Proposed: Introduce a new targeted rate to apply to all residential properties offering short term accommodation of \$200 per property and reclassify Bed and Breakfast businesses with four or more bedrooms for hire as commercial properties.	None	This is projected to collect \$252,000 which will reduce the amount to be collected from all ratepayers through the UAGC.			
Status quo	None	All residential ratepayers would pay an additional \$8.91 on the UAGC.			

Fairness, equity and empathy –

“Granny Flats”/minor dwellings and Retirement Villages – Rates Remissions

Our core values of empathy and compassion, along with fairness and equity are among the matters we consider when making decisions about how our activities should be funded. Two issues have been raised with us in recent times, where those impacted consider they are not being treated fairly or with empathy.

- Those people who have one additional unit on their property are charged additional uniform charges. Where they only make use of this second dwelling for family and friends on a non-paying basis, a remission of these additional charges is available upon application and subject to certain conditions being met.

We are proposing to add to our rates remission policy so that there will be an automatic remission of 50% of the fixed charges applicable to owners with one additional unit used as accommodation where these units are 50m² or less in size (as these are permitted to be built on a property as of right in our District Plan). This should provide greater certainty and require less administration for the relevant property owners.

- Those residents of retirement villages who own a “licence to occupy” their homes, rather than having a freehold interest in their home, are unable to access the rates rebate made available by central

government when they have very low incomes. They are however still required to pay the rates through their contracts with the retirement villages. This difference in treatment has been acknowledged by some other Councils. The Retirement Villages Association advocated that we should make a grant to the relevant retirement villages as well. After researching the issue, we came to the conclusion that it would be showing empathy to a small section of our community to remit their rates to an amount equal to that which they would receive from central government, should they have owned their homes outright. This proposal will cost approximately \$50,000 per year.

Other alternatives we considered were to do nothing or to provide a grant at a small fixed amount regardless of each person’s circumstances. We have taken the view that to do nothing is not living up to our core values and to simply make a set figure grant is relatively too generous to some people and equally, not good enough for those who would receive more.

These changes alter our Rates Remission policy which is being consulted on alongside the Long Term Plan. Please refer to www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp for more information and to make your views about this known.



Fees and Charges Increases

Where possible, Council charges fees and charges for its activities. In most cases, these fees do not fully pay for the activity so the public good element is covered by rates. In the 2015-2025 Long Term Plan, there are no significant changes to the policies setting fees and charges. Some key changes are highlighted below.

District Fees and Charges

Charges in the building control and monitoring area have been reviewed and have been recalculated to ensure that they are being funded in line with our policy. This has resulted in a number of changes, both increases and decreases, but overall there is no change to the underlying fee structure. The fees for the rubbish and recycling activity have also been reviewed and some small increases are proposed.

Local Fees and Charges

A new fee is proposed of \$2 per hour or \$15 daily rate for use of the Hahei Park and Ride (with an exemption upon application for residents and ratepayers in the Hahei Village area).

The Mercury Bay Community Board proposes upgrading harbour facilities at:

- Purangi Boat Ramp
- Ferry Landing
- Whitianga Wharf; and
- Kuaotunu Boat Ramp

A new fee is proposed for annual and daily purposes for recreational boat launching/trailer parking permits and these fees will be implemented at each site as each of these facilities is upgraded.

The Tairua-Pauanui Community Board is in the process of upgrading the wharf and boat ramp facilities at Marys Beach Reserve in Tairua and proposes to upgrade the boat ramp at Royal Billy Point, Pauanui. It will investigate the level of fees for the use of these facilities in the future.

A schedule of the current and proposed fees and charges can be viewed at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp

Thames Community Board Area – Local Economic Development

The Thames Community Board has heard from the community and local business groups that greater focus, coordination and promotion of Thames is needed if its potential as a commercial centre and visitor destination is to be realised. We are proposing to provide additional funding to market and promote Thames through a new

position at a cost of \$90,000 per annum alongside an additional \$50,000 per year, for the first 3 years of the Long Term Plan, to facilitate economic development in the Thames Community Board area. This would be funded from the targeted local rates.

Options Considered	Implications on levels of service	Financial implications
1. Proposal An additional investment in local economic development of \$140,000 per year for the next 3 years	Funding is to provide additional services to improve the local economy through coordination, facilitation and promotion (\$90,000 p.a.) and support external groups' local economic development projects (\$50,000 p.a.)	Additional cost to Thames average local rates of \$24.18 per annum
2. Only provide funding of \$90,000 per year for promotion and marketing activity	There will be no funding to support external groups local economic development projects.	Additional cost to Thames average local rates of \$15.55 per annum
3. Only provide funding of \$50,000 to support external groups to deliver local economic development projects.	There will be no position to coordinate and facilitate the promotion of Thames.	Additional cost to Thames average local rates of \$8.64 per annum

Whangamata Community Board – Local Roads and Footpaths

The Whangamata Community Board is proposing that it accelerates its long-standing gradual programme of footpath construction and kerbing and channel to key roads so that the footpath on Bellona Road is completed in 2016 and all priority roads have kerb and channel by the end of 2017. From that point, Council will simply maintain

the wide road berms and tidy road edges rather than constructing new footpaths or more kerb and channelling. This proposal is consistent with feedback over several years that the Whangamata community prefers a less urban, more holiday style environment and, therefore, footpaths are not desired on every road in the township.

Options Considered	Implications on levels of service	Financial implications
Proposing to complete priority footpath programme in the 2015/16 year and priority kerb and channel programme in years 2015/16 and 2016/17 then simply maintaining wide road berms and keep road edges tidy over the balance of the Long Term Plan.	A different level of service than in previous years where a small amount of kerb and channelling and footpaths were constructed each year.	The cost of this programme is \$1.271 million, which accounts for \$13.87 of the average local rate in 2016/17 and \$18.55 in 2017/18.
Maintain a long term kerb and channel programme and new footpath programme.	No change to the status quo.	The costs of such an optional programme are at the discretion of the Council. For each \$100,000 spent on this activity, it would add an average of \$1.80 to the average local rates.

Whangamata Community Board – Wentworth Valley Seal extension and Walkway/Cycleway

In the 2012-2022 Long Term Plan, there was a budget for a \$1million project to extend the seal on Wentworth Valley Road. The Whangamata Community Board has considered the options for access to Wentworth Valley and wishes to improve the access for both walking and cycling for the economic potential that this project has for the area and District. The Board is proposing to spend \$70,000 to develop the business case for this project in the 2017-2018 year and, if the concept

is economically beneficial, to extend the seal and construct a walkway/cycleway in the following year. The capital cost of this project is estimated at \$2.4million. The options for this project will be developed and further put to the community through the next Long Term Plan process but the Community Board is keen to receive feedback on this potential project now as well.

World War 1 Memorial Forests – Te Wao Whakamaumaharatanga

This project aims to establish a series of memorial native forests around the Coromandel Peninsula in order to commemorate the NZ soldiers who died in World War 1. In total it is proposed that 18,166 trees will be planted at a series of five (or more) different sites around the Coromandel. The trees are designed to become national Memorial Forests which will enhance the environmental values of the Coromandel, and also act as a place for people to walk and remember New Zealand history.

The estimated cost of the project is \$453,000 which will be spread over ten years. Council proposes to fund the initial purchase of the trees, and help to coordinate volunteers and school groups to undertake the first year's planting, while long-term maintenance will be undertaken by contractors and suitably qualified volunteers. The \$453,000 estimated cost of the project will be offset by grants received by external agencies and also by funds received from members of the public purchasing trees to commemorate their relatives who died in World War 1.

The planting of the Memorial Forests is proposed to commence in 2015 and conclude by Armistice Day 2018. While the project is now underway, the main costs will be spread over the ten years of the Plan with funding provided through to 2025 for long-term maintenance of the trees.

A range of other options have been considered which involved greater use of volunteers to maintain the trees. These options had slightly lower costs and therefore rates impacts but the proposed contractor/volunteer mix was considered the option most likely to ensure the safe development and long-term sustainability of the forests.

For more information see
www.tcdc.govt.nz/WW1memorialforest

Investigations - Projects and issues

As part of developing the proposals for the Long Term Plan, we have begun work towards some major developments which, if implemented, could lead to significant change in the District.

As our Plan must be prepared at a specified point in time, there will always be some matters where we do not have enough information yet to make a decision about whether these should be included in the Plan or not.

The Long Term Plan is an opportunity to inform our community of those significant matters we aspire

to and are investigating as well as those matters where our plans are more solid. The following projects are all issues to be explored in some detail in the next three years. If these investigations lead to more substantive proposals they will be consulted on, either separately or, as part of future long term plans.

Local Government re-organisation

Local government reorganisation means changes to the structure of local authorities. It could include changes to boundaries; creation/abolition of a council; amalgamation of councils; or transfer of functions from one council to another. There are currently three re-organisation proposals being considered by the Local Government Commission for Hawkes Bay, Northland and Wellington.

No proposals have been put forward for the Waikato region but the topic has been discussed at various forums by various organisations. We have investigated different options and have done sufficient ground work to readily respond if a proposal was put forward for the region that affected our District.



Mercury Bay – Destination Boat Ramp

A destination Boat Ramp has been signalled as a high priority for the Mercury Bay Community Board since the 2012-2022 Long Term Plan. The Board has budgeted \$615,000 next year and \$112,000 in the 2018/2019 financial year for this project. In beginning the more detailed investigations, the Board has seen wider possibilities for this project and is exploring a much larger scale development which, should it be feasible, may require considerably more funding.



Sub-regional Aquatic Centre

The current swimming pool in Thames is due for a significant renewal programme in 2021. The current pool provides an adequate resource for local swimmers for recreation and sports training and the swimming school has enjoyed good success at the regional and local level; so much so that there are junior elite swimmers already commuting from Whitianga to train to a higher level.

The nearest 50 metre pool is in Morrinsville which is a long way away from many parts of our District and parts of the Hauraki District. Council proposes investigating the development of a 50 metre pool as a replacement for the current Thames Swimming Pool as a new sub-regional aquatic centre. Such a facility would operate on a different scale to the current, locally focussed pool and would likely only be feasible if there was community and financial support for the proposal from the whole District and the wider sub-region.

The Plan includes a budget of \$175,000 to upgrade the pool in 2020/2021. It also includes \$53,000 in 2017/2018 to fund the research, concept design, economic feasibility and consultation regarding a sub-regional facility.

Coromandel Harbour Facilities

Council recognises that one of the major barriers to economic growth for the Coromandel area is the limitations associated with harbour access. The many harbour facilities around the Coromandel Harbour require maintenance and regular renewal. In 2013, Council saw the opportunity to rethink how we deliver these services so that the needs of all users are best served and the wider economic possibilities are realised. This work is one of the Anchor projects supporting economic

development. We have been investigating and preparing a series of options for the development of these facilities alongside the community and industry that will:

- Retain and facilitate growth of the aquaculture industry through the proposed Sugar Loaf wharf expansion.
- Develop a “Blue Highway” concept to create an additional transport route between Auckland CBD and the Northern Peninsula, benefitting tourism and enabling commuting opportunities.
- Develop improved facilities for Coromandel Harbour users focused on improved wharfage facilities, all-tide access and parking capacity.
- Reduce health and safety risks through separation of commercial and recreational activities and implement measures to improve hazard management.

Currently, in addition to advancing the resource consent for the upgrade and expansion of Sugar Loaf Wharf, other options relating to other facilities are in development. As the environmental and economic feasibility of these options is better understood, proposals on how to proceed, including how best to fund the options, will be taken to the community. This may require amendments to the Long Term Plan alongside the 2016/17 or 2017/18 annual plans, in order to add new budgets, once any proposals are sufficiently advanced in the next 12 to 24 months.

Coromandel Township roading improvements

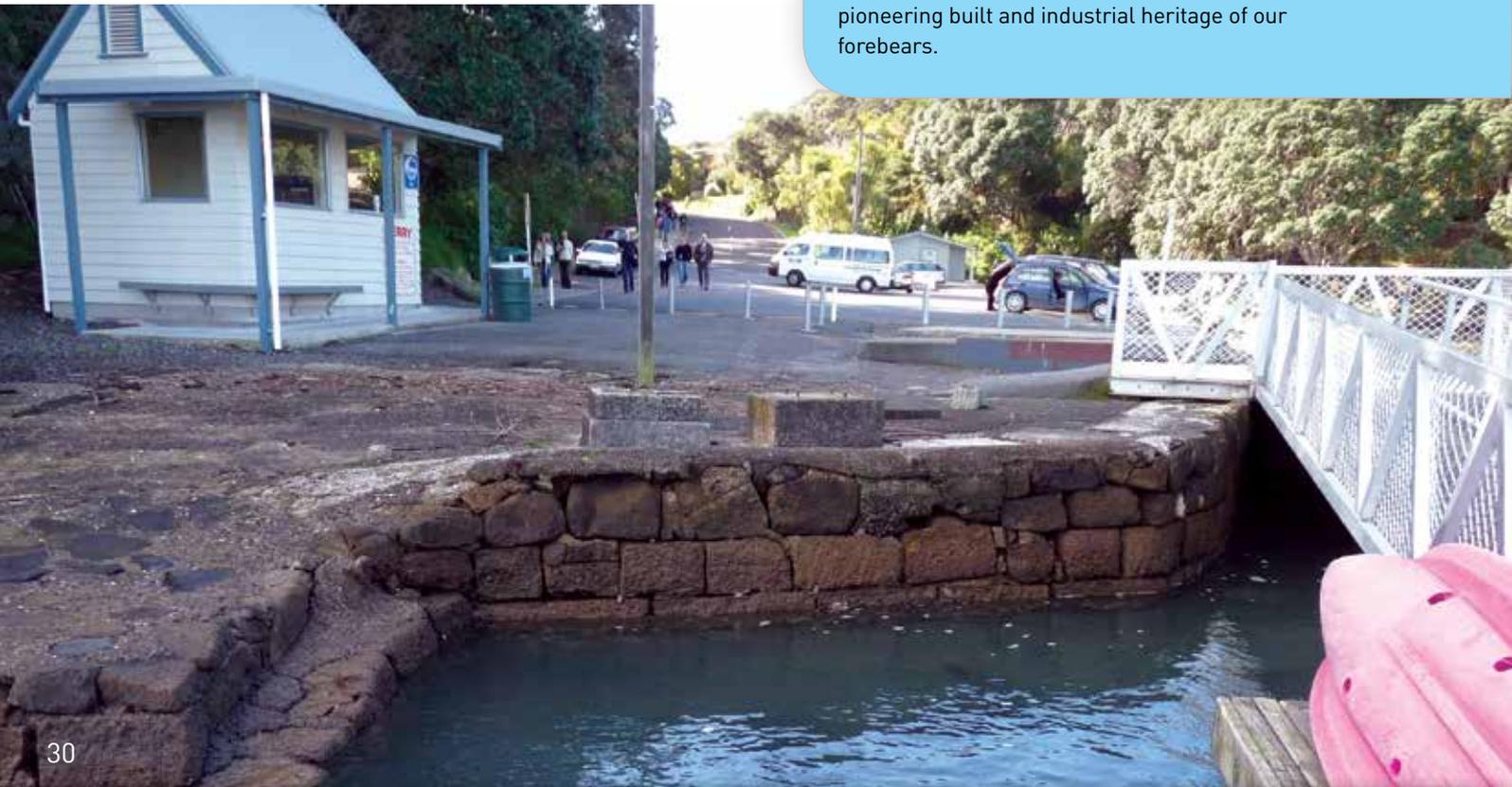
The Coromandel-Colville Community Board continues to investigate options for relieving congestion in the township. Options for a bypass to the east of the town centre and a smaller internal bypass in the Pita Street area are being considered as the direct bypass options are currently considered to be unaffordable for the Coromandel-Colville ratepayers.

Water conservation and demand management

With our peak, summertime population often coinciding with dry weather conditions, residents and visitors to our area are frequently faced with water restrictions. Additionally, the cost of supplying water to eleven townships is one of our larger cost areas. We are developing a water demand strategy to improve how we use and manage our fresh water resources. Over the 2015/2016 year we will refine the options, consult with the community on the local and district wide preferences where change is indicated and reach preferred solutions. It is likely that some water restrictions will form part of the suite of measures needed to manage peak demand but areas such as Tairua, which regularly experience shortages, will be prioritised for earliest action.

Coromandel – A Heritage Region

The next decade is likely to be a time of major demographic change in New Zealand and, in times of change, many people value reminders of the past. Over the next three years, we want to work with our many communities and partners – with iwi, with local residents and with visitors who love this place – to investigate the possibilities for a future Coromandel as a heritage region that celebrates and cherishes its rich heritage and unique geography. This vision is for the Coromandel in 20-50 years' time and will encompass our natural heritage including our marine areas as well as the pioneering built and industrial heritage of our forebears.



To the reader:
**Independent auditor's report on Thames-Coromandel District Council's
 Consultation Document for its proposed 2015/25 Long-Term Plan**

I am the Auditor-General's appointed auditor for Thames-Coromandel District Council (the *Council*). Section 93C of the Local Government Act (the *Act*) requires an audit report on the Council's consultation document. I have carried out this audit using the staff and resources of Audit New Zealand. We completed this audit on 4 March 2015.

Opinion

In my opinion:

- the consultation document provides an effective basis for public participation in the Council's decisions about the proposed content of its 2015/25 long-term plan, because it:
 - fairly represents the matters proposed for inclusion in the long term plan,
 - identifies and explains the main issues and choices facing the Council and the district, and the consequences of those choices and
 - the information and assumptions underlying the information in the consultation document are reasonable.

Basis of Opinion

We carried out our work in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, relevant international standards and the ethical requirements in those standards.¹

We assessed the evidence the Council has to support the information and disclosures in the consultation document. To select appropriate audit procedures, we assessed the risk of material misstatement and the Council's systems and processes applying to the preparation of the consultation document.

We did not evaluate the security and controls over the publication of the consultation document.

Responsibilities of the Council and auditor

The Council is responsible for:

- meeting all legal requirements relating to its procedures, decisions, consultation, disclosures, and other actions associated with preparing and publishing the consultation document and long-term plan whether in printed or electronic form;
- having systems and processes in place to provide the supporting information and analysis the Council needs to be able to prepare a consultation document and long term plan that meet the purposes set out in the Act; and
- ensuring that any forecast financial information being presented has been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand.

I am responsible for reporting on the consultation document, as required by section 93C of the Act. I do not express an opinion on the merits of any policy content of the consultation document.

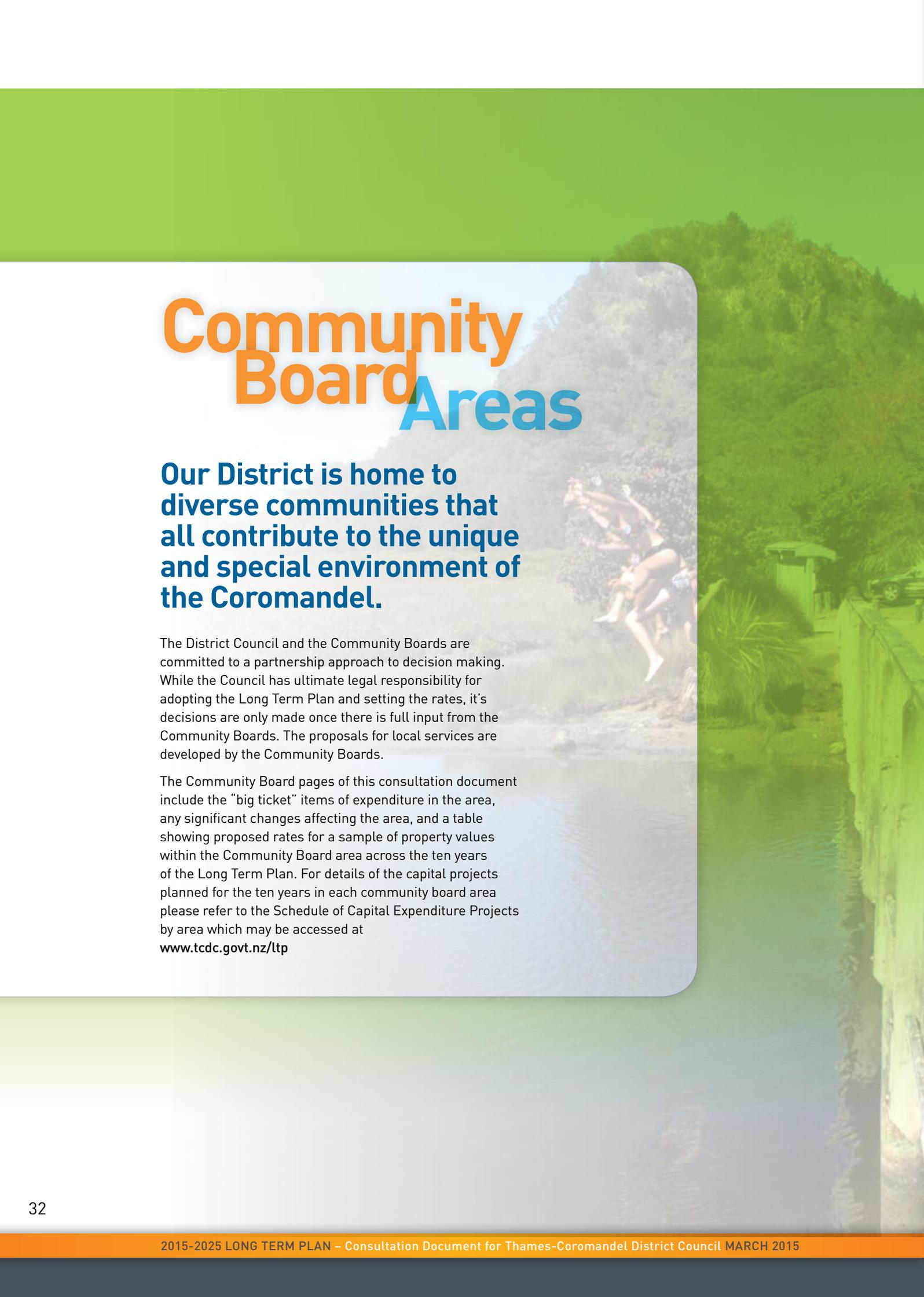
Independence

We have followed the independence requirements of the Auditor-General, which incorporate those of the External Reporting Board. Other than our work in carrying out all legally required external audits, we have no relationship with or interests in the Council or any of its subsidiaries.



David Walker
 Audit New Zealand
 On behalf of the Auditor-General
 Auckland, New Zealand

¹ The International Standard on Assurance Engagements (New Zealand) 3000 (Revised): *Assurance Engagements Other Than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information* and The International Standard on Assurance Engagements 3400: *The Examination of Prospective Financial Information*.



Community Board Areas

Our District is home to diverse communities that all contribute to the unique and special environment of the Coromandel.

The District Council and the Community Boards are committed to a partnership approach to decision making. While the Council has ultimate legal responsibility for adopting the Long Term Plan and setting the rates, it's decisions are only made once there is full input from the Community Boards. The proposals for local services are developed by the Community Boards.

The Community Board pages of this consultation document include the "big ticket" items of expenditure in the area, any significant changes affecting the area, and a table showing proposed rates for a sample of property values within the Community Board area across the ten years of the Long Term Plan. For details of the capital projects planned for the ten years in each community board area please refer to the Schedule of Capital Expenditure Projects by area which may be accessed at www.tcdc.govt.nz/ltp



Coromandel-Colville Community Board area

The Coromandel-Colville Community Board area has a relatively small resident and ratepayer base which means there is a focus on maintaining the infrastructure and other community assets that have been built over many generations. The key future looking focus of the Board (and for the benefit of the whole District) is the potential development of the Coromandel Harbour facilities

for growth in aquaculture, tourism, recreational opportunities and improved commuter access to and from Auckland through a fast ferry service. Two of the major issues signalled for further investigation in this consultation document are the Coromandel Harbour Facilities project and the Coromandel Northern By-Pass at pages 29-30.

Big Ticket Items in Coromandel-Colville Community Board area

	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Hannafords Carpark Extension		\$152K								
Hannafords Wharf Renewal										\$303K
Sugarloaf Upgrade for Aquaculture*		\$2.09M			\$1.66M				\$1.18M	
Coromandel Wharf Renewal					\$195K					
Coromandel Boat Ramp Renewal										\$171K
Te Kouma Road Intersection Upgrade			\$649K							
Windy Point Upgrade			\$1.03M							
Pottery Lane Service Lane Extension				\$1.04M						
Coromandel Sportsville		\$473K								
Coromandel Water Supply Resource Consent - Karaka		\$132K								
Coromandel - Drinking Water Standard Upgrade					\$581K					
Coromandel Wastewater Resource Consent Renewal										\$168K
Oamaru Bay Wastewater Resource Consent Renewal								\$112K		

* to be part-funded by Industry - \$3.6M industry funding provided for at \$400K per year from 2016/17 to 2024/2025

What you should know about your rates

It is proposed to change the funding of stormwater from a local charge to a district charge and to change the funding of cemeteries, public conveniences and the Information Centre from district charges to local charges. The impacts on average rates of each of these changes in the 2015/16 year are:

Stormwater	+ \$4.87
Cemeteries	+ \$25.18
Public Conveniences	+ \$14.14
Information Centre	+ \$16.06

For more information about these changes see page 19-23 of this document.

How much will it cost the ratepayer?

Here is a sample of rates in the Coromandel-Colville Community Board area by property type and value. To find out what the proposed rates changes mean for your rates in 2015/2016 visit the rates calculator online at www.tcdc.govt.nz/rates

Rate sample by property type	2010/2011	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Residential LV \$140K	\$2,287	\$1,956	\$2,111	\$2,283	\$2,376	\$2,399	\$2,448	\$2,518	\$2,526	\$2,562	\$2,619	\$2,650
Residential LV \$225K	\$2,528	\$2,336	\$2,432	\$2,463	\$2,561	\$2,586	\$2,639	\$2,715	\$2,724	\$2,764	\$2,829	\$2,862
Residential LV \$400K	\$2,887	\$2,373	\$2,434	\$2,467	\$2,574	\$2,605	\$2,667	\$2,748	\$2,759	\$2,803	\$2,875	\$2,914
Rural LV \$4.2M	\$6,327	\$6,702	\$5,656	\$5,655	\$5,932	\$5,995	\$6,186	\$6,410	\$6,349	\$6,398	\$6,593	\$6,625
Commercial LV \$3M	\$22,367	\$21,332	\$18,597	\$18,566	\$18,857	\$18,939	\$19,173	\$19,456	\$19,510	\$19,725	\$20,091	\$20,247

Coromandel-Colville Community Board



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Mercury Bay Community Board area

The Mercury Bay Community Board area is projected to have the majority of the growth of the District over the next ten years, so there is a concerted focus on new facilities and infrastructure that will deliver to the current population and those who move here, or visit, in the future. Upgrading Whitianga Town is a key project in the first four

years of the Plan, as is constructing the next stage of the Mercury Bay Cemetery, managing the coastal erosion at Brophy's beach and upgrading the toilet facilities at Hot Water Beach. The Board working with other groups, is also investigating a medical centre in Whitianga.

Big Ticket Items in Mercury Bay Community Board area

	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Mercury Bay Cemetery - Stage 2	\$543K									
Whitianga Hall Redevelopment						\$164K				
Destination Boat Ramp*	\$615K			\$112K						
Purangi Ramp Upgrade and Pontoon		\$179K								
Ferry Landing Pontoon Extension			\$81K							
Kuaotunu Ramp Improvements				\$95K						
Whitianga Sports Ground Development	\$1.72M									
Brophy's Beach Coastal Erosion	\$574K									
Hahei Park and Ride Development	\$438K					\$179K				
Hot Water Beach Toilet Upgrade	\$695K									
Bull Paddock - New Toilet		\$168K								
Buffalo Beach - New Toilet		\$168K								
Whitianga Town Upgrade	\$3.14M									
Whitianga Link Roads (rezoned areas)**				\$707K						
Coromandel Great Walks - Cathedral Coast Walkway	\$1.85M									
Lees Road Seal Extension		\$1.05M								
Whitianga - Drinking Water Standard Upgrade			\$305K							
Matarangi - Drinking Water Standard Upgrade			\$143K							

Big Ticket Items in Mercury Bay Community Board area

	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Matarangi Wastewater Treatment Upgrade		\$518K								
Whitianga Wastewater Plant Optimisation		\$315K								
Whitianga Wastewater Balance Tank									\$3.37M	
Wastewater Pumpstation-Moewai			\$514K							
Cooks Beach Wastewater Upgrade					\$1.14M					
Hahei Wastewater Upgrade			\$350K							
Matarangi Wastewater Resource Consent renewal					\$321K					
Whitianga Stormwater - Sarah Avenue		\$739K								

* The Destination Boat Ramp project is expanded upon on page 28 of this document.

** Whitianga Link Roads is a provision for future roading for new developments that will only be needed as and when these eventuate.

What you should know about your rates

It is proposed to change the funding of stormwater from a local charge to a district charge and to change the funding of cemeteries and public conveniences to local charges. The impacts on average rates of each of these changes in the 2015/16 year are:

Stormwater	+ \$12.72
Cemeteries	- \$5.56
Public Conveniences	- \$8.31

For more information about these changes see pages 19-20 of this document.

How much will it cost the ratepayer?

Here is a sample of rates in the Mercury Bay Community Board area by property type and value. To find out what the proposed rates changes mean for your rates in 2015/2016 visit the rates calculator online at www.tcdc.govt.nz/rates

Rate sample by property type	2010/ 2011	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Residential LV \$140K	\$2,128	\$2,047	\$2,153	\$2,207	\$2,289	\$2,321	\$2,367	\$2,419	\$2,455	\$2,480	\$2,519	\$2,557
Residential LV \$225K	\$2,321	\$2,245	\$2,331	\$2,389	\$2,476	\$2,510	\$2,561	\$2,617	\$2,661	\$2,687	\$2,732	\$2,773
Residential LV \$400K	\$2,620	\$2,561	\$2,606	\$2,674	\$2,769	\$2,809	\$2,867	\$2,929	\$2,986	\$3,012	\$3,064	\$3,110
Rural LV \$4.2M	\$5,718	\$6,411	\$5,923	\$6,234	\$6,481	\$6,629	\$6,818	\$6,952	\$7,256	\$7,195	\$7,304	\$7,405
Commercial LV \$3M	\$20,064	\$20,453	\$18,470	\$18,648	\$18,904	\$19,039	\$19,263	\$19,469	\$19,775	\$19,900	\$20,189	\$20,383

Mercury Bay Community Board



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Tairua-Pauanui Community Board area

Over the last year the Tairua – Pauanui Community Board has progressed two major community projects – the Manaia Road causeway in Tairua and the Pauanui community building. In the early years of the Long Term Plan, key priorities for both communities are maintaining current local facilities and improving harbour facilities. There will be a programme of on-going safety improvements for the Hikuai Settlement Road and safety and bridge-widening improvements at Duck Creek in the final year of the Plan. Council's Water Demand strategy will move from an investigation phase into solutions and options development in the first year of this Long Term Plan. This is particularly important for Tairua as it regularly experiences water shortages during the summer peak. Work being completed at Pepe Stream in the

current year will increase water supply, provide continuity of supply for regular demand and improve the peak supply issues to an extent. The Pauanui aquifer reconfiguration project, presently underway, will optimise the water supply system removing the need for a previously signalled upgrade. A catchment-wide programme of improvement is being designed to manage flooding and erosion at Holland Stream. This programme will be implemented from the district stormwater budgets over the first 2-3 years of this Plan. Funding to construct roading improvements for the Orchard Block development is no longer included in the Long Term Plan as growth projections indicate it is not required at this stage. However, if this sub-division develops significantly during the ten years, this position will be reconsidered.

Big Ticket Items in the Tairua-Pauanui Community Board area

	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Tairua - Mary Beach Wharf and Boat Ramp*	\$1.23M									
Pauanui - Royal Billy Point Ramp and Pontoon*			\$378K							
Pauanui - Wharf Pontoon replacement				\$112K						
Pauanui Trail		\$50K								
Pepe Bridge Reserve	\$87K									
Minor Reserves Projects- including Pauanui Waterways Tennis Courts upgrade			\$189K							
Hikuai Settlement Road - Bridge Upgrade (Duck Creek)										\$703K
Tairua - Drinking Water Standard Upgrade							\$447K			
Pauanui - Drinking Water Standard Upgrade						\$559K				

* As these projects are completed, fees for wharfage and use of the boat ramps and parking will be implemented

What you should know about your rates

It is proposed to change the funding of stormwater from a local charge to a district charge and to change the funding of cemeteries, public conveniences and the Information Centre from district charges to local charges. The impacts on rates of each of these changes in the 2015/16 year are:

Stormwater	+ \$34.68
Cemeteries	- \$6.64
Public Conveniences	+ \$9.94
Information Centre	+ \$11.06

For more information about these changes see pages 19-23 of this document.

How much will it cost the ratepayer?

Here is a sample of rates in the Tairua-Pauanui Community Board area by property type and value. To find out what the proposed rates changes mean for your rates in 2015/2016 visit the rates calculator online at www.tcdc.govt.nz/rates

Rate sample by property type	2010/2011	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Residential LV \$140K	\$2,187	\$2,049	\$2,217	\$2,260	\$2,331	\$2,371	\$2,405	\$2,451	\$2,478	\$2,519	\$2,564	\$2,604
Residential LV \$225K	\$2,401	\$2,248	\$2,395	\$2,438	\$2,511	\$2,555	\$2,591	\$2,639	\$2,670	\$2,717	\$2,769	\$2,813
Residential LV \$400K	\$2,730	\$2,567	\$2,670	\$2,715	\$2,791	\$2,840	\$2,879	\$2,929	\$2,968	\$3,022	\$3,083	\$3,134
Rural LV \$4.2M	\$5,802	\$5,899	\$5,412	\$5,494	\$5,592	\$5,753	\$5,791	\$5,827	\$5,956	\$6,084	\$6,229	\$6,355
Commercial LV \$3M	\$21,194	\$20,502	\$18,527	\$18,561	\$18,724	\$18,878	\$19,004	\$19,153	\$19,345	\$19,619	\$19,950	\$20,175

Tairua-Pauanui Community Board



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Thames Community Board area

The Thames Community Board area includes the largest population centre as well as the developing industrial centre at Kopu. As it is a long-established area the Board plans to maintain current infrastructure, facilities and services while partnering with others to deliver some major new or replacement facilities such as the multisport indoor sports facility. A major upgrade is planned to the water supply system in the southern, rural section of the area and the Thames town water supply, wastewater and stormwater systems will be priorities for renewals work once the main

investigations programme is complete. Alongside the investment the District Council is making in economic development, the Thames Community Board is proposing to make funding available for local economic development initiatives in response to feedback from community and business groups. One of the area's key recreational facilities, the Thames Pool, needs to be significantly renewed in about five years' time and we have committed funding to the investigation and feasibility of a new sub-regional Aquatic Centre. Please refer to page 29 for more information.

Big Ticket Items in Thames Community Board area

	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Airfield Improvements	\$53K									
Wharf Renewals			\$133K							\$1.60M
Boat Ramp Renewals										\$93K
Library Building Functionality Improvements	\$165K									
Multisport Indoor Sports Facility*	\$4.15M									
Rhodes Park Grandstand upgrade**				\$2.90M						
Public Toilet Replacements	\$229K									
Thames Pool Renewals						\$175K				
Economic Development Coordinator	\$270K									
Economic Development Grants	\$150K									
Thames South Water Upgrade		\$4.87M								\$337K
Thames South Water Meters		\$316K								
Thames - Drinking Water Standard Upgrade		\$429K								

* Net cost \$2.37M - (\$4.15M - community fund raising \$296K + public grants \$1.48M)

**Net cost \$2.17M - (\$2.90M - community fund raising \$735K)

Big Ticket Items in Thames Community Board area

	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Thames Wastewater Consent Renewal				\$133K						
Kopu Stormwater Detention				\$764K						
Kopu Stormwater Pumpstation								\$2.58M		

What you should know about your rates

It is proposed to change the funding of stormwater from a local charge to a district charge and to change the funding of cemeteries and public conveniences to local charges. The impacts on average rates of each of these changes in the 2015/16 year are:

Stormwater	- \$100.01
Cemeteries	+ \$7.19
Public Conveniences	- \$3.08

For more information about these changes see pages 19-20 of this document.

How much will it cost the ratepayer?

Here is a sample of rates in the Thames Community Board area by property type and value.

To find out what the proposed rates changes mean for your rates in 2015/2016 visit the rates calculator online at www.tcdc.govt.nz/rates

Rate sample by property type	2010/ 2011	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Residential LV \$140K	\$2,243	\$2,077	\$2,169	\$2,193	\$2,298	\$2,294	\$2,352	\$2,423	\$2,453	\$2,500	\$2,549	\$2,596
Residential LV \$225K	\$2,512	\$2,369	\$2,391	\$2,414	\$2,527	\$2,522	\$2,585	\$2,663	\$2,696	\$2,750	\$2,806	\$2,859
Residential LV \$400K	\$2,930	\$2,826	\$2,755	\$2,779	\$2,906	\$2,900	\$2,971	\$3,059	\$3,100	\$3,165	\$3,230	\$3,292
Rural LV \$4.2M	\$11,395	\$9,854	\$8,495	\$8,581	\$8,199	\$8,140	\$8,361	\$8,630	\$8,772	\$8,990	\$9,162	\$9,337
Commercial LV \$3M	\$23,447	\$24,524	\$20,149	\$20,147	\$20,524	\$20,504	\$20,748	\$21,046	\$21,247	\$21,579	\$21,913	\$22,176

Thames Community Board



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Whangamata Community Board area

In the first two years of the Long Term Plan, Whangamata Community Board has prioritised completing the last key footpath connections in town and tidying up road berms and kerbs, rather than a new footpaths programme, so as to retain the beach character of Whangamata. The Board sees the potential of the Great Walks programme to enhance what the Coromandel has to offer tourists and has budgeted sealing of the Wentworth Valley Road as well as a new cycleway and walkway up the Wentworth Valley to

the existing walking tracks. There is money within this budget to complete investigations into the economic feasibility of this proposal before making a final decision on whether or not to proceed. Several community projects are envisaged in the early years of the plan such as redevelopment of Williamson Park, upgrading of Aitken Road Tennis Courts, parking and disabled access to Island View Reserve, investigation into a new Community Marae facility, and on-going commitment to development of harbour walking tracks.

Big Ticket Items in Whangamata Community Board area

	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Williamson Park Redevelopment	\$294K									
Harbour Walkway/ Cycleway	\$45K									
Beach Road Playground			\$108K							
Onemana Toilet Upgrade		\$126K								
Complete priority footpaths	\$233K									
Complete priority kerb and channel programme	\$1.04M									
Wentworth Valley Seal Extension and Cycleway			\$2.50M							
Manuka Place water supply consent renewal		\$94K								
Whangamata – Drinking Water Standards Upgrade				\$398K						
Onemana – Drinking Water Standards Upgrade				\$69K						
Whangamata Water Supply System optimisation			\$606K							

What you should know about your rates

It is proposed to change the funding of stormwater from a local charge to a district charge and to change the funding of cemeteries, public conveniences and the Information Centre from district charges to local charges. The impacts on average rates of each of these changes in the 2015/16 year are:

Stormwater	+ \$42.36
Cemeteries	- \$5.43
Public Conveniences	+ \$1.91
Information Centre	+ \$8.57

For more information about these changes see pages 19-23 of this document.

How much will it cost the ratepayer?

Here is a sample of rates in the Whangamata Community Board area by property type and value. To find out what the proposed rates changes mean for your rates in 2015/2016 visit the rates calculator online at www.tcdc.govt.nz/rates

Rate sample by property type	2010/2011	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Residential LV \$140K	\$1,966	\$1,966	\$2,138	\$2,193	\$2,266	\$2,299	\$2,354	\$2,398	\$2,415	\$2,450	\$2,490	\$2,524
Residential LV \$225K	\$2,157	\$2,150	\$2,306	\$2,364	\$2,441	\$2,476	\$2,537	\$2,584	\$2,602	\$2,642	\$2,686	\$2,724
Residential LV \$400K	\$2,469	\$2,451	\$2,560	\$2,626	\$2,708	\$2,748	\$2,822	\$2,869	\$2,889	\$2,934	\$2,984	\$3,026
Rural LV \$4.2M	\$5,656	\$5,567	\$4,859	\$5,075	\$5,242	\$5,357	\$5,656	\$5,658	\$5,657	\$5,716	\$5,769	\$5,824
Commercial LV \$3M	\$19,878	\$19,933	\$18,322	\$18,451	\$18,660	\$18,778	\$19,090	\$19,212	\$19,308	\$19,531	\$19,794	\$19,966

Whangamata Community Board



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About Thames-Coromandel District Council

Council's Vision

We will be a leading District Council in New Zealand through the provision of quality services and facilities, which are affordable, and delivered, with a high standard of customer service.

We will earn respect, both as a good community citizen and through our support of community organisations, economic development and the protection of the environment.

Through our actions, the Coromandel will be the most desirable area of New Zealand in which to live, work and visit.

Council's Values

- Displaying empathy and compassion
- Fiscally responsible and prudent with ratepayers money
- Integrity, transparency and accountability in all our actions
- Treating all employees fairly and evenly in accordance with good employer practice
- Being a great place to work where staff are inspired to be the best they can
- Working with and having meaningful and on-going consultation with all of our communities
- Creating strong partnerships with our district's Iwi
- Having pride in what we do
- Being a highly effective and fast moving organisation

Council Outcomes

On behalf of the Coromandel Peninsula, the Council aims to achieve:

- A prosperous district – the Coromandel Peninsula has a prosperous economy
- A liveable district – The Coromandel Peninsula is a preferred area of New Zealand in which to live, work and raise a family and have a safe and satisfying life, and
- A clean and green district – The Coromandel Peninsula's natural environment provides a unique sense of place



THAMES – COROMANDEL DISTRICT

